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Ex-spy urges curbing Soviets at Olympics

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Tomas Shuman, a former Soviet Embassy press officer now living in California, has joined in calling on President Reagan to prevent the Soviet Union from using the summer Olympics for "a massive spying operation."

Mr. Shuman, whose name was Yuri Bezmenov before he defected to the West 14 years ago, said in an interview yesterday the United States should deny the Soviet Olympic Committee's request to allow unrestricted travel privileges for Soviet journalists during the games beginning next July in Los Angeles.

A former editor and public relations officer for the Novosti Press Agency, which he described as "a KGB front for disinformation and ideological subversion," Mr. Shuman said "at least 75 percent of Soviet journalists are KGB members whose assignments during the Olympics will include spying, subversion and recruitment of agents to buy, steal or search out U.S. high-technology secrets."

He said the administration also should turn down a Soviet request to land 25 Aeroflot planes in Los Angeles and dock a large cruise ship in Los Angeles harbor.

He said Aeroflot's Ilyushin turboprop jets, which seat about 200 people, "conceal the number and types of personnel arriving." He said the planes "are equipped for aerial spying and provide better control against possible athletic defections" by Soviet Olympic participants.

The cruise ship would be "a piece of Soviet territory, not subject to normal search procedures, (where) about 300 KGB agents, technicians, translators and analysts will be busy (on lower decks) vacuuming the air waves to record military communications, private telephone conversations, police arrangements and federal security strategies," he stated.

Mr. Shuman has joined the Ban the Soviets Coalition, a grass-roots network of 145 conservative and anti-communist groups trying to stop Soviet participation in the Los Angeles Olympics.

The coalition is holding a press conference today in Los Angeles, at which Mr. Shuman said he would detail the probable Soviet spying scenario, based on his own experience as a longtime KGB operative.

At the press conference, the coalition is expected to name Trygve P. McDonald, the 23-year-old son of slain Rep. Larry P. McDonald, D-Ga., its honorary national chairman. Rep. McDonald was killed with 268 other passengers aboard a Korean Air Lines jumbo jet shot down by Soviet military aircraft last Sept. 1.

State Department Counselor Edward J. Derwinski, a former Republican congressman, is coordinating government arrangements — including Soviet participation — in the Los Angeles Olympics, according to a department spokesman.

The Soviets "won't get most" of their requests, the spokesman predicted. "Who knows what will happen?" he said, because agreements are still being negotiated by the sponsoring Olympic committees and participating countries.

Soviet airliners do not now have landing rights in the United States, but "there is sure to be some relaxation of (those) rules," the spokesman said.

Sharp restrictions on the movement of Soviet athletes and access to them are expected — for security reasons — once they arrive in the United States, the spokesman added.

However, travel restrictions for Soviet journalists going to California just for the Olympics may be eased, the spokesman indicated.

Last November, for the first time since 1967, the United States increased the number of locations off-limits to visiting Soviet diplomats and journalists.

Most of the city of Los Angeles and all of Los Angeles County, where a lot of electronics and defense-oriented industries are located, were placed off limits to the Soviets. Also closed to Soviet diplomats and journalists is high-technology "Silicon Valley" outside San Francisco.